

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 QUITO 07190 262033Z

60

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

/062 W

----- 011287

R 261927Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7402

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 7190

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, EC

SUBJECT: PUBLIC REACTION TO CONTINUED DETENTION OF COUP PLOTTERS-
LIKELY GOE ACTION

1. SUMMARY: THE FATE OF ACCUSED COUP PLOTTERS HELD BY THE GOE AND THE PROCEDURES FOR THEIR PROSECUTION ARE SERVING AS THE BASIS FOR LIVELY PUBLIC DISCUSSION. CIVILIAN POLITICIANS AND NEWS MEDIA CRITICS ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE CURRENT SITUATION TO DIRECT STRONG PUBLIC CRITICISM AT THE RODRIGUEZ LARA GOVERNMENT. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT THE REPOSE OF THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE TO THE INCREASINGLY VOCAL OPPOSITION OR TOWARD THE UNCUSED, BUT IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE GOE WILL DEAL LENIENTLY WITH MOST, IF NOT ALL, OF THE 29 OFFICERS BEING HELD. END SUMMARY

2. THE FATE OF ALLEGED COUP PLOTTERS CURRENTLY HELD BY THE GOE IS THE BASIS FOR LIVELY PUBLIC DISCUSSION. TWO CIVILIANS AND 29 MILITARY OFFICERS REMAIN IN GOVERNMENT CUSTODY. THIS QUESTION IS ENTWINED WITH SPECULATION OVER THE STRENGTH AND LONGEVITY OF THE RODRIGUEZ LARA GOVERNMENT, AND WITH THE EFFORTS OF THE "OPPOSITION" CIVILIAN POLITICIANS AND CRITICS TO BEING ABOUT A RETURN TO CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 QUITO 07190 262033Z

3. CIVILIAN POLITICIANS AND NEWS MEDIA CRITICS ARE

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE CURRENT SITUATION TO DIRECT STRONG PUBLIC CRITICISM AT THE MILITARY REGIME. FOR EXAMPLE, THE JUNTA CIVICA, A GROUP WHICH PURPORTS TO REPRESENT SEVERAL TRADITIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES HAS PUBLISHED A STRONGLY WORDED MANIFESTO PROTESTING AGAINST THE "ABUSES OF POWER OF THE DICTORSHIP OF GENERAL RODRIGUEZ." MOREOVER, EXPRESIDENT CARLOS JULIO AROSEMENA, A LEADER OF THE NATIONALIST REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (PNR), HAS ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL DEFEND THE ACCUSED GENERAL JUAN ARAUJO.

4. THE QUESTION OF WHO IS DEFENDING WHOM IS FOR THE MOMENT CONFUSED. THE GOE HAD ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT OF RETIRED GENERAL JULIO ORELLANA AS THE DEFENDER OF THOSE CHARGED BY THE GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, IN PRESS ACCOUNTS PUBLISHED SEPT. 26 ORELLANA SAID HE WAS STEPPING DOWN BECUASE THE ACCUSED UNDER THE MILITARY PENAL CODE HAVE THE RIGHT TO NAME THEIR OWN DEFENSE ATTORNEYS.

5. LAWYERS CLAIMING TO REPRESENT GENERALS SOLIS AND ARAUJO AND COL. CEVALLOS HAVE PUBLISHED ACCUSATIONS THAT THE GOE IS DENYING THEM ACCESS TO THEIR CLIENTS. IT IS NOT CLEAR IF THE ACCUSED OFFICERS ARE ABLE TO SELECT THEIR OWN LAWYERS OR WILL HAVE TO RELY ON THE SERVICES OF GENERAL ORELLANA. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS JORGE CRESPO (1968 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OF ARNE, ACCION REVOLUCIONARIA NACIONAL ECUATORIANA) REPRESENTS GEN. GONZALEZ AND COL. CEVALLOS, AND FRANCISCO ACOSTA YEPES (ALONG WITH AROSEMENA) WILL REPRESENT SOLIS AND ARAUJO. ACOSTA IS A FORMER MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND FOREIGN RELATIONS UNDER AROSEMENA AND THE LATTER'S PERSONAL FRIEND.

6. GENERAL CONZALEZ' WIFE, ALONE AND JOINTLY WITH OTHER OFFICERS' WIVES, HAS PUBLISHED FRONT PAGE ADS IN ECUADOR'S REMARKABLY FREE PRESS CALLING FOR OPEN TRIALS FOR THE ACCUSED OFFICERS AND ASKING WHETHER MEN MOTIVATED BY THE NATIONAL INTEREST SHOULD BE PUNISHED. VHE PRESS HAS ALSO PUBLISHED A JOINT DECLARATION BY GENERALS ARAUJO AND SOLIS AND COL. JORGE CEVALLOS IN WHICH THE AUTHORS CLAIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COUP ATTEMPT AND ADVANCE THE THESIS THAT OTHER OFFICERS SHOULD NOT BE PUNISHED BECAUSE THEIR CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 QUITO 07190 262033Z

ONLY ACT WAS TO LIVE UP TO THEIR OATHS OF OFFICE BY OBEYING SUPERIOR OFFICERS. IN AN ANSWERING DECLARATION DATED SEPT. 23, MINISTER OF DEFENSE GENERAL ANDRES ARRATA VIRTUALLY ACCEPTED THAT THESIS.

7. IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT LEVEL OF CIVILIAN OPPOSITION WILL BE TOLERATED BY THE RODRIGUEZ GOVERNMENT. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE POST COUP ARREST OF GUAYAQUIL POLITICIAN

ASAAD BUCARAM FOLLOWING HIS PUBLICATION OF A STRONG CRITICISM OF THE GOE WAS A SIGNAL TO KEEP OPPOSITION WITHIN BOUNDS. TO THIS POINT THE CIVILIAN OPPOSITION HAS LIMITED ITSELF TO PUBLISHED COMMENTARY AND NO OVERT ACTION.

8. COMMENT: FROM MANY CONTACTS THE EMBASSY HAS DEVELOPED THE VIEW THAT A CONSENSUS EXISTS AMONG SENIOR LEVEL MILITARY OFFICERS THAT PUNISHMENT OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THE COUP ATTEMPT SHOULD BE KEPT TO A MINIMUM. AT THE SAME TIME THERE IS ALSO EVIDENCE THAT A SMALL MINORITY OF OFFICERS WOULD APPLY MAXIMUM ACTIONS. OFFICERS OF BOTH VIEWS HAVE EXPRESSED THE WISH THAT THE LEGAL PROCESSES BE FINISHED QUICKLY SO AS TO BECOME MILITARY HISTORY RATHER THAN A CONTINUING DIVISIVE FORCE.

9. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES IT LIKELY THAT THE RODRIGUEZ LARA GOVERNMENT WILL DEAL LENIENTLY WITH MOST, IF NOT ALL OF THE 29 OFFICERS CURRENTLY HELD. MODERATE ACTION IS CONSISTENT WITH THE TOLERANT NATURE EXPRESSED BY ECUADOREANS IN SUCH MATTERS. IT WOULD ALSO BE CONSISTENT WITH THE MEASURES OF APPARENT ACCOMMODATION AND COOPTION THAT RODRIGUEZ LARA SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN TAKING IN AN EFFORT TO QUIET DISCONTENT WITHIN THE ECUADOREAN ARMED FORCES AND TO RESTORE HIS POWER BASE.
BREWSTER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, PRISONERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975QUITO07190
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750335-0122
From: QUITO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750913/aaaaalng.tel
Line Count: 141
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 SEP 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <06 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PUBLIC REACTION TO CONTINUED DETENTION OF COUP PLOTTERS- LIKELY GOE ACTION
TAGS: PINS, PINT, EC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006